

SENATOR WARNER PRESIDING

SENATOR WARNER: One minute.

SENATOR MOORE: ...the body to defeat Senator Lamb's amendment.

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Yes, Mr. President, members, I actually commend Senator Lamb for bringing this to our attention because I think everyone should understand what we are doing here and hopefully you'd be comfortable with what we are doing. This is one of the few areas in our budget, at least in my humble opinion, that we are actually, really making an investment in the future for all Nebraskans, whether they are young or old, whether in Scottsbluff, Omaha, Lincoln, Grand Island, Crawford, Harrison, Deshler, Falls City, South Sioux City, whatever, because it affects everyone in the State of Nebraska. That is one of the things that really tipped my thoughts to the...this is a very valuable contribution. As I said, it is one of the few things that we are truly making an investment in. We are not simply doing it in an operation mode but we are making investment in the future. And I would ask you what more can we do than have educational facilities in the form of books and library facilities that will benefit all Nebraskans. Admittedly, it is an ongoing expense, but it really, if you look at the chart, I have got the flow chart, it goes out for three years, three years. It is really a capital investment in Nebraska. It brings Omaha and Lincoln library facilities to all of the State of Nebraska. It brings the level of availability and resources to all areas of Nebraska. If you look at Senator Robak's sheet she handed out, it is Columbus, Fremont, York, Grand Island, North Platte, Beatrice, Hastings, Kearney, Sidney, Bellevue, Scottsbluff, McCook, Norfolk. Those, then, serve other local libraries and they are automated...they are coming on line at a lesser degree on their own form using PCs. This is a level of use across the state, a level of use of resources across the state that will benefit everyone. I really see this as an economic or rural development issue, where it brings all of resources to all Nebraskans regardless of where they are at. And I guess I don't want to come on too strong on this because it...but it ought to be obvious that libraries are critical to every Nebraskan and to education in the future. And it would seem to me that this is a relatively modest investment for three